

BIRDS OBSERVED IN HAWKINS COUNTY, EAST  
TENNESSEE.

J. H. FLEMING.

The following notes were made in the vicinity of Surgoinsville on the Holston river, between March 30 and April 15, 1907, and can by no means be considered as representing the normal conditions, for almost two weeks before my arrival the weather had been unusually warm, on March 30 the country between Bristol, Tennessee, and Rogersville, the nearest station to my destination, was ablaze with color; the peach orchards in full bloom, the pink contrasting with the pale blue of the wistaria about the houses, and the wooded, leafy hill-sides were already showing great patches of white cherry and pink red-bud. On March 31 it rained and on April 1 the higher mountains on the Virginia border were snow capped, frost came on the night of the second, and any migrations that may have been under way ceased. It was cold and rained most of the time till the 9th, when it turned to snow, the weather getting gradually colder until the ponds were frozen over, and during the remainder of my stay there was a good deal of snow alternating with rain, and sharp frosts every night. Under these conditions bird life was not very evident, and had it not been for the assistance of my friend, Mr. E. F. Handy, C. E., and the kindness of Dr. W. C. Lyons, in whose garden I was able to observe many birds, the short time at my disposal would have shown little result.

The valley of the Holston river is about 1,400 feet above sea level, the land rising gradually to sharp topped ridges that reach 1,700 feet at the back of Dr. Lyons' estate. The whole country is a succession of fertile valleys, timbered with much oak, walnut, and hickory in the uncultivated parts; separated by ridges which rise gradually on one side and drop suddenly on the other. These ridges are well covered with hardwood. Birds were scarce in the woods, probably owing to the weather conditions.

*Querquedula discors*.—Blue-winged Teal. A female was taken by Mr. Handy on April 11.

*Fulica americana*.—American Coot. One was taken on April 11.

*Oryechus vociferus*.—Killdeer. A pair seen on April 2 and 3.

*Colinus virginianus*.—Bob-white. Resident and quite common. These are the original stock, as no new blood has been introduced, this part of Tennessee is one of the very few places where the indigenous bird can still be found. Locally called "Partridge."

*Bonasa umbellus*.—Ruffed Grouse. There seem to be very few left. I saw fresh signs of them and Mr. Handy had the skin of one he took in February. Locally called "Pheasant."

*Zenaidura macroura*.—Mourning Dove. Very common everywhere. During a snow storm I observed a pair flying in wide circles, making a very loud droning sound with their wings, quite different from the usual whistle.

*Cathartes aura*.—Turkey Vulture. Common resident, breeding. Dr. Lyons tells me that buzzard's quills are used to make toothpicks on account of their toughness.

*Accipiter atricapillus*.—American Goshawk. I saw one April 5, with the ashy breast of the fully adult bird, and Mr. Handy had seen one some time previous to this date.

*Falco columbarius*.—Pigeon Hawk. Mr. Handy shot one in September, 1906, and the skin is now in my collection.

*Dryobates pubescens*.—Downy Woodpecker. Saw four, including a pair.

*Coccyzus pilatus*.—Pileated Woodpecker. Heard one on April 9, and Mr. Handy had the tail feathers of one which he had shot during the winter.

*Centurus carolinus*.—Red-bellied Woodpecker. Saw one on March 31, and another on April 8.

*Colaptes auratus luteus*.—Northern Flicker. A flock seen on April 13; only two or three seen previous to this. No specimens taken.

*Sayornis phoebe*.—Phoebe. Scarce; saw only four, the first on March 30.

*Cyanocitta cristata*.—Blue Jay. Common resident.

*Corvus brachyrhynchos*.—American Crow. Fairly common; usually alone or in pairs.

*Agelaius phoeniceus*.—Red-winged Blackbird. Saw several April 7; one taken on the 18th.

*Sturnella magna*.—Meadowlark. Several seen April 1 to 8.

*Quiscalus quiscula*.—Purple Grackle. Small flocks seen April 1. None were taken, but I got near enough to individuals to be reasonably sure that they were not *uncus*.

*Carpodacus purpureus*.—Purple Finch. Abundant in flocks from

March 31 to April 12, feeding on elm buds. There was a good proportion of red birds, and on April 8 I heard a bird in the striped olive plumage singing.

*Astragalinus tristis*.—American Goldfinch. Large flocks feeding on the elm. On April 2 a few birds were changing to spring plumage, and by April 13 a good many had partially changed.

*Spinus pinus*.—Pine Siskin. Saw a number on April 1 feeding with a flock of Goldfinches.

*Passer domesticus*.—English Sparrow. Found generally distributed along roads, in fields, and about houses, but not very plentiful anywhere. The conditions are much the same as in England, and the birds seem less active and more contented with a permanent country life than they do further north.

*Poocetes gramineus*.—Vesper Sparrow. A few seen from April 1 to 11, and a flock on April 13.

*Zonotrichia albicollis*.—White-throated Sparrow. A male seen on April 8.

*Spizella socialis*.—Chipping Sparrow. Saw a few on March 30. They were very common on April 2, and remained so until April 11, when a flock of over one hundred was seen, but on the 13th only a few were seen.

*Spizella pusilla*.—Field Sparrow. Saw one on April 3, and they became common until large flocks were seen from the 11th to the 13th. Shot a partial albino on the 15th, and Mr. Handy saw two more on the 11th.

*Junco hyemalis*.—Slate-colored Junco. Not common. The only ones seen were a few about the outbuildings. The ones I took proved to belong to this form, and were apparently barren birds.

*Melospiza cinerea melodia*.—Song Sparrow. Saw one April 11, and another April 13.

*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*.—Towhee. A male seen April 8.

*Cardinalis cardinalis*.—Cardinal. Common resident. One was seen carrying nesting materials on April 5. I found this bird as often in the hard-wood brush as about the houses, but always in pairs.

*Ampelis cedrorum*.—Cedar Waxwing. Saw several large flocks from March 31 to April 4.

*Dendroica coronata*.—Myrtle Warbler. Fairly common in winter dress from March 31 to April 9, on which latter date the first one in changing plumage was noted; and birds in nearly full plumage were noted from the 11th to the 14th. These warblers roost at night in the red cedars.

*Mimus polyglottos*.—Mockingbird. Resident and fairly common. One pair had a nest in Dr. Lyons' garden, but had not more than finished it before the cold wave came, so there were no eggs in the nest.

*Toxostoma rufum*.—Brown Thrasher. Two seen April 3, and one on the 10th, and one on the 11th.

*Thryothorus ludovicianus*.—Carolina Wren. First seen on April 2, and several were seen on April 7. They were no doubt keeping out of the way until the cold wave was over.

*Thryomanes bewickii*.—Bewick's Wren. Fairly common about the houses. One was singing on April 3, and Mr. Connor Lyons found a nest and one egg on the 9th. This wren seems to have a much more loosely jointed tail than has the House Wren; it gives one the impression of being worked on a ball socket.

*Sitta carolinensis*.—White-breasted Nuthatch. Fairly common from April 1 to 13, sometimes in small flocks, but usually in pairs. Specimens I examined have a more slender beak than Ontario birds.

*Parus bicolor*.—Tufted Titmouse. Several seen from April 7 to 11.

*Parus carolinensis*.—Carolina Chickadee. Fairly common and well distributed in the woods.

*Polipotila carulca*.—Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. One seen and one shot on April 8.

*Merula migratoria*.—American Robin. A few seen on March 30, and no others until April 5. After that date several flocks were seen up to April 15. The birds appeared to be migrants. Although no birds were taken I doubt if they were *achrysteus*. Mr. Handy failed to find any breeding.

*Sialia sialis*.—Bluebird. Fairly common in fields and new clearings.

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## THE RUFFED GROUSE (*Bonasa umbellus*) IN PENNSYLVANIA.

FRANK L. BURNS.

During the season of 1906, that king of game birds, the "Pheasant" of Pennsylvania, perhaps reached its high-water mark in point of abundance for recent years, especially in our northern counties; and the reports to our game commissioners confirmed the belief that it was present in every county of the state excepting only Philadelphia. I have been fortunate in securing a number of skins through the kindness of several local sportsmen returning from several weeks' shooting in the upper tier of counties; one bird being in the beautiful gray plumage, "Silver-tail" as it is locally known; some five or six